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Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 /031 W
----------098592 050208Z /21
R 040907Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7682
INFO AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

UNCLAS TEHRAN 3177

EO 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINR, IR
SUBJ: AMBASSADOR ELM-MOTLAQ ARRESTED FOR EMBEZZLEMENT

1. MOSTAFA ELM-MOTLAQ, UNTIL RECENTLY GOI AMBASSADOR TO THE SUDAN, HAS BEEN ARRESTED IN TEHRAN ON CHARGES OF EMBEZZLING MORE THAN 9.8 MILLION RIALS (US DOLS140,000). ACCORDING TO THE CIVIL SERVICE TRIBUNAL PROSECUTOR, ELM-MOTLAQ WAS APPREHENDED JUST BEFORE A PLANNED DEPARTURE FOR LONDON, HAVING LIQUIDATED HIS IRANIAN PROPERTY.

2. CHARGES AGAINST THE AMBASSADOR INCLUDE, INTER ALIA, TRANSFERRING EMBASSY FUNDS TO THE PRIVATE ACCOUNT OF EMBASSY SECOND SECRETARY NAYEBOSSADRI (WHO HAS BEEN RECALLED TO TEHRAN FOR QUESTIONING); CONSPIRACY WITH THE EMBASSY'S SUDANESE LAND-LORD; RETAINING PROCEEDS FROM THE SALE OF THE EMBASSY'S MERCEDES; BUYING FURNITURE FOR HIS OWN LONDON APARTMENT WITH OFFICIAL FUNDS; AND MISAPPROPRIATING LOCALEMPLOYEE OVERTIME PAY. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS ELM-MOTLAQ HAS RETURNED MORE THAN DOLS 25,000 BUT THE GOVERNMENT IS CLAIMING FULL COMPENSATION INCLUDING A FINE OF TWICE THE AMOUNT EMBEZZLED.

3. BIO NOTE: ELM-MOTLAQ, 60, WAS BORN IN ISFAHAN AND RECEIVED AN UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE FROM THE FORMER BRITISH COLLEGE THERE IN 1939. HE WORKED FOR TEN YEARS AS A
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BUSINESSMAN IN ISFAHAN AND TEHRAN, LEAVING FOR LONDON IN 1947. DURING PERIODS 1953-55 AND 1956-58 HE WAS A STUDENT AT SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY, RECEIVING A M.A. AND PHD. FOLLOWING HIS RETURN TO IRAN HE JOINED THE PLAN ORGANI-ZATION, FIRST AS HEAD OF THE INDUSTRIAL PLANNING DIVISION AND IN 1962, BECOMING DIRECTOR OF THE PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DIVISION; AT THE SAME TIME HE WORKED AS ECONOMIC EDITOR

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FOR THE NEWSPAPER ETTELA'AT. AFTER A TOUR WITH THE ECONOMIC DIVISION OF CENTORSECRETARIAT HE WAS POSTED TO LONDON AS COUNSELOR FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS. IN 1972 HE BECAME DIRECTOR OF THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, MFA. AMONG THE MANY BOOKS ELM-MOTLAQ HAS TRANSLATED FROM ENGLISH INTO FARSI IS "PRINCIPLES OF MANAGEMENT". COMMENT: THIS IS FIRST WE HAVE HEARD OF THE AMBASSADOR'S PECUNIARY PECCADILLOS AND WOULD WELCOME EMBASSY KHARTOUM'S REACTION.
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